

LOMED ***Learner Outcomes and Measurement for Effective Educational Design*** **Continued Innovation & Professional Learning**

This is the story of LOMED. New members of your team who are being asked to contribute to the evolving narrative of educational innovation will want to know what has come before them. This chapter will enable you to answer their questions, and welcome them to the historical ground breaking work ahead.

Six areas are highlighted below that call for energy by the Educational Leadership Teams (ELT) and Professional Learning Teams (PLT). The six areas of focus are: 1) strengthening educational vision; 2) expanding 21st century models; 3) defining learner outcomes; 4) designing and facilitating powerful learning; 5) noticing and documenting success; and 6) designing and facilitating ongoing professional learning.

Who is the Coalition of Innovating Congregations?

New York leads the nation with the largest number of congregations engaged in educational innovation that makes a positive and measurable difference in learners' lives. Innovation is in service of creating Jewish learning and living that enables children and families to **experience and construct** meaningful and purposeful life journeys grounded in Judaism.

The generous support of UJA-Federation of New York is enabling in 2010-2011 23 congregations to receive the grant opportunities of LOMED. Twelve additional congregations are newly entering the Coalition with their participation in Lifnei LOMED. These 35 congregations are diverse in their movement affiliation, size, and geography across Greater New York.

Common to all of these congregations is a belief that educational change is necessary and possible. Coalition congregations are led by two key teams, not singular leaders.

Educational Leadership Team

The Educational Leadership Team (ELT) stands on the balcony and oversees the big picture. The ELT usually made up of clergy, educational directors, a teacher and a lay leader, works in full collaboration to achieve their bold new visions. Strategically guided by a consultant they identify their successes, build on them, and stretch to create measurable results in learners.

Professional Leadership Team

The Professional Learning Team (PLT) and most often includes the educational director and a few lead/master teachers. They lead the congregation with bold steps into educational innovation. Teachers on the PLT are the first to experience and practice powerful learning and assessment methods. They are also charged with leading ongoing professional learning for

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additional staff in the congregation.

The work of the Coalition is supported by the partnership of BJENY-SAJES, the Experiment in Congregational Education; and the Leadership Institute for Congregational Educators of HUC/JTS.

Ultimate Success: Whole Person Learning

Setting Priorities

Coalition Congregations share a definition of success: Jewish education that nurtures the whole learner. Jewish education for these congregations is not just about a student increasing knowledge or feeling good about a learning experience. Rather, these congregations agree that their ultimate goal is to support a learner in integrating Jewish knowledge, living, beliefs and values and sense of Belonging. A short hand for framing whole person learning is **knowing, doing, believing/valuing and belonging** (KDBB). This is the kind of learning that leads to a Jewish life well lived.

To manage the enormity of creating education that can contribute to a life well lived. Coalition Congregations adapt a big idea from secular education known as a **Priority Goal**. Wiggins and McTighe, the leading authors of Understanding by Design, state that curriculum has to be created with the end in mind. These authors pose the question: What is the ultimate life transferable goal that an educational system is trying to achieve? The answer is the mission or the priority goal(s).

Once a Coalition congregation identifies their long term foci, they then use them to guide all learning. Wiggins and McTighe provide an example of a long term life goal in secular education: A learner will grow to be a contributing citizen in our democracy. An educational system with that goal would design all learning, math, science, history, etc. with that goal as their target.

Jewish educational leaders in the Coalition adapt this practice from Wiggins and McTighe, and design their learning with this framework: “**If** this is our goal, **then** in what ways does this learning build toward it?”

Priority Goals are derived from Vision

The ELTs select a priority goal based on their congregation’s educational vision. Most often an ELT identifies one to three priority life goals to guide decision making about what, when and how learning takes place. The priority goal is “why learning takes place.”

Learning Now that Leads to a Life Journey Grounded in Judaism

The assumption of LOMED is that if a child is to develop lifelong Jewish habits of mind (Knowledge), hand (Doing), heart (Beliefs/values) and feet (a sense of belonging) he/she needs practice and powerful experience in their youth. Steven M. Cohen points out that “sociologists of religious identity speak of the three B’s: Belief, Behavior, and Belonging.” (Cohen, 2008).

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Knowledge surely serves as an indispensable basis for the three B's. Together they address the whole person—the head (Knowledge acquisition), the hand (Behavior/doing), the heart (Beliefs and values), and the feet (Belonging, i.e. where and with whom we stand).

The priority goal is the long term goal of the learning, **and** it serves to guide the very experience a child has in the present. By wholly experiencing the journey now, the child has a kind of learning that acts to imprint the habits needed to construct a life journey grounded in Judaism.

Bethamie Horowitz, a leading researcher on Jewish identity, notes the importance of “imprinting” habits on a child’s memory. Dr. Horowitz points to the necessity of combining powerful experiences of imprinting with reflection and imagination when trying to build religious identity.

Therefore, Coalition Congregations create opportunities for powerful Jewish experiences, time for reflection and opportunity for learners to creatively respond to life’s big questions. A working assumption is that a child who experiences a powerful Jewish journey today will have a blueprint for constructing an adult Jewish journey tomorrow.

Examples of priority life goals to be lived today that foster Jewish habits of the heart, head, hand and feet:

- Being on a spiritual journey rooted in Jewish tradition
- Continually growing in relationship to Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael
- Being on a journey of applying Torah to daily life
- Being on a journey of mending the world guided by a Jewish moral compass

To reach this ultimate success Coalition Congregations are developing innovations in multiple areas.

ELTs and PLTs Focus on Six Major Components of an Educational System

1. Educational Vision
2. Twenty-First Century Models
3. Defining Learner Outcomes
4. Noticing and Documenting Success
5. Designing and Facilitating Powerful Learning
6. Designing and Facilitating Ongoing Professional Learning

1. STRENGTHENING EDUCATIONAL VISION

Coalition congregations have clear and guiding visions. After engaging in thoughtful reflection about what the congregation values and hopes to achieve, Coalition congregations create

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compelling visions. A vision is a picture of what education can look like in the next five years that is in service of long term goals for learners. Visions are meant to inspire and direct action. Pictures of the future most often include answers to: who are the learners, where and when is learning taking place, who are the teachers and why is learning taking place (priority goals).

Of course, any congregation would say, we want it all. But, a congregation, like any organization, has limited resources. Therefore, in order not to over reach, or to work without direction these congregations use their visions to direct decision making. Visions help a congregation say yes to some work and no to others.

Visions evolve

Vision for Coalition congregations is not a static picture. Rather Coalition congregations are continually engaged in experimentation, assessment, and reflection that deepen understanding of vision. For example, a congregation may begin with a vision that says, “We will be an intergenerational community.” Initially that statement may only be a wish. But after experimenting with intergenerational learning a congregation will see clearly what it takes to do that well and the possibilities it may hold. New insights can make a vision more vivid.

Experimentation also leads a congregation to insights that not only clarify, but also sometimes change that vision. Coalition congregations therefore continually engage teachers, parents, the community and learners in conversation about the experience of the vision. The turning and returning to vision with many people throughout the congregation is necessary, so that vision is a well to draw on and not a statement on the wall.

Vision Driven Decision Making

Congregations strive to practice vision driven decision making. They work to use their vision as a guidepost, or a North Star, that helps them make key decisions about teaching and learning, models/structures, governance, resources and leadership. Coalition congregations practice strategic decision making at all levels to align to their goals and vision. A short hand for that way of working is “**if, then** decision making.” **If** this is our vision, **then** this is what we do.

2. TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MODELS

Coalition Congregations put a great deal of energy into creating twenty-first century models of Jewish learning. When leaders identify what they hope to achieve as a result of Jewish education, they most often conclude that the classroom alone is not sufficient. Coalition congregations experiment with models that may include a classroom, but are not constrained by one.

Building Blocks for Next Generation Models

We’ve observed that the building blocks of twenty- first century models include:

1. Regular engagement of parent/caregiver as well as the child;

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2. Learning in real life settings;
3. Integrating children's Jewish learning experience with the larger congregation's values and practices;
4. Connections with the larger community;
5. New teacher roles and expectations;
6. Relationships among peers and across generations; and
7. Choices for the learner.
8. Until now there are additional but less used building blocks like technology, use of communal space etc.

Like in a Rubrics cube, we see congregations mix and match these building blocks to create new models. ELTs learn from their experiments with new models and over time, launch bolder models for children, families and community members. At this time, a new frontier still awaits. Most models are still in their infancy and are in need of further expansion and experimentation. This is a primary area of energy for leaders in congregations.

3. DEFINING LEARNER OUTCOMES

A bit like the angels on Jacob's ladder, PLTs and ELTs move up and down the ladder of abstraction. Vision and priority goals are high altitude, long term outcomes for learners. Long term life goals are important destination points in the distance that guide educational decision making. However, it is equally important for teachers to have short term benchmarks that act as indicators for reaching long term goals.

Therefore, PLTs move down the ladder of abstraction, and clearly articulate learner outcomes, also called noticing targets, for more immediate observation and assessment.

Professional Learning Teams equipped with their priority goal and supported by their consultant, identify learner outcomes/noticing targets for units of study. Together they ask the questions:

- a. **If** this is a subject area/unit I'm teaching, **then** what are the big ideas that are connected to and/or contribute to deep understanding of the long term goal?
- b. **If** this is a relevant big idea connected to a long term priority goal, **then** what are reasonable, observable and measureable Knowledge, action (Doing), Belief/values

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and sense of Belonging short term outcomes?

Sample rubrics are provided by LOMED to help PLTs articulate their short term learner outcomes/noticing targets for a unit of study.

4. NOTICING AND DOCUMENTING SUCCESS

Once a PLT identifies learner outcomes/noticing targets they then identify the tools and prompts to capture growth over time. The documentation of growth and change over time is helpful in two ways. Firstly, it helps a teacher to see what kind of learning experience is most effective in showing change in a learner's Knowledge, values/Beliefs, actions (Doing) and sense of Belonging. Data collection enables a teacher to know what is working and what needs to change to reach goals more effectively. Secondly, data also helps a learner mark growth and change over time. Watching a growth chart, so to speak for a learner, is rewarding and motivating.

Teachers use Tools and Prompts to Collect Data

After identifying outcomes, teachers then collect data. Teacher select tools and prompts for assessing whole person learning. The LOMED consultant helps the teachers select appropriate tools and prompts for the subject area and age of the learner. Journals, photo essays, scrap books and blogs are a few examples of tools that are well matched for collecting success and growth in learner outcomes for knowing, doing, believing and belonging. Examples of prompts are: share a time when you felt close to something larger than yourself; or illustrate the options you considered before making a decision.

Teachers are not waiting until students are 39 years old to find out if the Jewish learning experience is successful. Instead, they are measuring short-term indicators of success in reaching learner outcomes/noticing targets, and using the results to guide their work and inspire their learners.

Educational Leadership Teams Also Practice Noticing and Documenting Success

Noticing and documenting success is not just the work of teachers, it is also the charge of the ELT. Leaders are charged with noticing, documenting and elevating the stories of success. ELTs are charged with standing on the balcony and shepherding the vision. It is their role to bring vivid pictures of success to the educational system.

Decision makers need to see the pictures of the world to come—their vision. We call the intentional collection and broadcasting of success throughout the congregational community--“Succeeding Out.”

Bolman and Deal, leading organizational change experts, emphasize the importance of creating heroes, stories, rituals and objects that tell the story of the core values and hopes and dreams of the organization. Leaders in the Coalition intentionally share success to foster more success.

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5. DESIGNING AND FACILITATING POWERFUL LEARNING

PLT's use short term learner outcomes/noticing targets to guide construction of powerful learning. Powerful learning is characterized by the use The Design Principles for the 21st century (identified by the Lippman Kanfer Institute). PLTs act as the interior designers for new models. They work to create the interior, the experience that is housed in the new architecture of 21st century models.

PLTs can apply to work with an educational resource provider, ERP (e.g. Teva, STorahtelling, ExploraTorah, Hazon, Avodah Arts, Facing History, and Moving Traditions). These ERPs are well practiced in creating powerful Jewish learning.

The PLTs participate in two special learning sessions in their region called Living and Learning sessions. One is held in the fall and one in the spring. They gather with other congregations to learn from colleagues innovations. Designing effective Jewish learning for new models is not something a teacher can just look up in a "how-to" manual. This is a time of experimentation and teachers need to and want to learn from one another's practice.

In the first year of LOMED congregations primarily worked with one design principle. This year, 2010-2011, the expectation is that congregations will work with several if not all four design principles. All are truly necessary when designing powerful learning.

Design Principles for the 21st century include:

1. *Learning will be anchored in caring purposeful relationships.*
To fulfill the purposes of Jewish education it is vital that we fashion learning experiences that draw on and nurture the yearning for connectedness.
2. *Learning will seek the answers to the questions, challenges, and meaning of everyday life.*
Just as Franz Rosenzweig once argued that Jewish learning should begin from life and lead to Torah – not from Torah to life, we recognize that today's learners need guides to help them uncover the answers to their everyday experiences.
3. *Learning will enable individuals to construct their own meaning through inquiry, problem solving, and discovery.*
The involvement of learners in shaping their educational experiences will produce more authentic, powerful learning.
4. *Learning will be content rich and accessible.*
In order to make Jewish literacy vital for today's learners, we must provide them with

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experiences rich in Jewish content, presented in inviting and engaging ways.

5. DESIGNING AND FACILITATING ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

PLTs Share Their Knowledge and Experience:

PLTs are taking bold steps to experiment with new models, 21st Century Design Principles, noticing targets and tools for measurement. Also, PLTs, are working with their LOMED consultant to co-plan and co-implement at least 8 hours of focused ongoing professional learning for additional staff members. The 8 hours of professional learning enable additional teachers to experiment with assessment and powerful learning.

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Defining Success

In conversation with the LOMED consultant, the PLT identifies the goals of the ongoing professional learning. The PLT has been exposed to new tools and techniques for designing powerful learning and assessment. The “ah ha” moments and the challenges encountered will make the PLT astute leaders of professional learning for additional staff members.

ERP resources can be applied to Professional Learning. When working with an ERP, PLTs think through the pre and post learning that has to take place so teachers can best learn and apply insights and methods to their own practice.

Working with an Educational Resource Provider is a second grant opportunity for all Coalition Congregations. This year ERPs are:

Teva; Avodah Arts, Hazon, Facing History; STorahtelling; ExploraTorah; Moving Traditions.

To begin planning, the PLT asks:

What will we take as evidence that the ongoing Professional Learning has made a positive difference for our teachers and ultimately for our students?

In each congregation, the PLT will have a different answer to this question. The PLT will have to assess what degree of readiness the staff has to engage with design principles or assessment methods. If staff has not spent much time learning together, they may need to build trust and safety among one another before being ready to engage with deeper learning. If the staff, has not yet been engaged in understanding the vision and goals of the congregation they may need to spend time on that subject prior to engaging with powerful learning and or assessment.

To help define success for the PL, the PLT tries out some of the following phrases and see which ones best match up with the needs and readiness of the teaching staff. Circle the ones that resonate.

We will be successful when teachers:

1. Know one another's role and contributions to the educational program
2. Contribute to creating a safe space for sharing questions and learning
3. Articulate a shared understanding of the educational program's goals, vision and values
4. Celebrate the successes, experiences and knowledge staff already has in applying and experimenting with the selected design principle
5. Experience the design principle and powerful learning associated with it

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6. Can articulate and apply long term and short term outcomes for learners
7. Can select and use assessment tools for whole person learning and reflect on collected data to help redesign learning and inform learner growth
8. Co-plan lessons using design principle and/or assessment tools and learner outcomes
9. Implement and reflect on the application of powerful learning/and or assessment tools and learner outcomes
10. Learn from colleagues' experimentation with
11. What else?

PLT's prioritize goals for the Professional Learning. They reflect on what is most realistic and beneficial. The following chart can help PLTs map out a realistic plan.

Sample Planning Document for a congregation that will have four 2 hour learning sessions for teachers.

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
Goals				
Assessment				
Connection				
Text study				
Core Discussion/Activity				
Reflection				
Next steps				

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Available Resources

If a PLT have defines success for its staff by any of the suggested responses in number 1-9, the PLT should have little to create anew. Along with a LOMED consultant, the PLT should be able to glean materials, lessons and activities from the following events that can be adapted to be used with your staff.

Review:

LOMED wikispace <http://lomed.wikispaces.com/>

Opening Meetings with LOMED Consultant and your Educational Leadership Team

Talmud page for understanding Priority Goal

Yachdav

Living and Learning

“Design Principles for the 21st Century,” *Redesigning Jewish Education for the 21st Century: A Lippman Kanfer Institute Working Paper.* (www.jesna.org).

*Noticing Targets documents from Yachav (list of noticing targets, how to select a tool, slides explaining NTs)

*Design Principle worksheets from Yachdav

Lesson Plan worksheet for Living and Learning

Explanation of Design Principles (with design principle selection form)

Priority goal definition and commentary midrash worksheet

*Available at lomed.wikispaces.com

Coalition Educators

Nine congregations are piloting working with a Coalition Educator. Each Coalition Educator works with three congregations to support the work of innovation within LOMED. Coalition Educators strengthen the PLT, connect congregations to one another and to the ERPs, bring powerful learning to new models, and help the ELT “success out.”

Summary

The Coalition of Innovating Congregations is leading the way to a Jewish education that makes a positive difference in learners’ lives. New goals, models, design and measurements are emerging as a result of the focused work of committed teams of professionals and lay leaders in LOMED.

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